

colleagues in the American Legion to ensure our Nation's veterans receive the benefits they have earned and deserve.

Madam Speaker, thank you. And thank you again to the Reverend, as we thank him for sharing his spiritual guidance and wisdom here today in the House of Representatives and for his commitment to serving his fellow veterans.

SCOTT GARDNER ACT

(Mrs. MYRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MYRICK. Today, I reintroduce the Scott Gardner Act. Tragically, Scott Gardner, who was a loving husband and father, was killed by a drunk illegal alien who remained in our country even though he had previous DWI convictions.

And we have had other constituents killed recently. Jasmine Lawrence and Min Chang were both killed in wrecks caused by drunk-driving illegal immigrants in Charlotte, North Carolina, area roads.

Most recently, 20-year-old LeeAnna Newman and her unborn child were killed just outside of my district after her car was struck by an illegal alien who later admitted to getting behind the wheel after drinking tequila. He had a previous conviction also in North Carolina.

This act will give our law enforcement and immigration officials the capacity and resources to deal with illegal aliens driving under the influence in a manner that fits the crime. It would make DWI grounds for mandatory detention and deportation of illegal aliens, and it would aid law enforcement and our immigration laws by requiring the sharing of information among Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies, who would be required to collect this information during the course of their normal duties.

State and local law enforcement agencies would be given the resources required to detain illegal aliens for DWI and immigration violations until they could be transferred to Federal authorities for deportation.

It is a travesty that our country allows illegal immigrants to remain after being found guilty of DWI.

We cannot prevent every instance of illegal aliens driving under the influence.

However, there is no reason we should not take every measure possible to remove habitual DWI offenders from our roads.

Our constituents expect us to ensure their safety and security.

The Scott Gardner Act will go a long way toward clearing our roads of criminal illegal aliens who represent a grave threat to the safety of our citizens.

THE EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

(Mr. ALTMIRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, the new Democratic Congress continues to listen to the concerns of middle-class Americans.

We know that average American families have actually lost ground over the past several years, even after several years of economic growth and high corporate profits. Wages are stagnant, personal debts are at an all-time high, and individual savings are at an all-time low. Higher education and health care costs are skyrocketing.

Last week, the Democratic Congress took a step towards helping middle-class families by passing the Employee Free Choice Act, which helps Americans join together to bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

Once again, our legislation passed with bipartisan support, and once again, it will benefit working families across this country. This is just one more example of how the new Congress is leading this Nation in a new direction, just as the American people asked us to do last November.

SLOW-BLEED IS NO OPTION

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, right now, brave Americans are going door to door in some of the most dangerous parts of Iraq. They are working with the Iraqi people to bring stability to Iraq, and they are doing this because it is their duty and because they understand our enemy, what is at stake should we not succeed.

Right now, in households all across this country, there are families praying for the safe return of their loved ones. They understand the dangers. They know what is at stake. Unfortunately, in Washington, it would seem that too many politicians do not realize what is at stake, what the consequences are of failure. Instead, some propose we tell these soldiers and their families that Congress believes that the only choice is to close the door. They say retreat is our only option. Their desire is to adopt a policy of slow bleed, methodically squeezing off the necessary funding.

We all know our enemy is committed. We also know that this slow-bleed tactic, supported by some here in Washington, is a weakly disguised measure to turn our backs on our soldiers. That is something, Madam Speaker, that I cannot support.

SCOTT GARDNER ACT

(Mr. MCINTYRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCINTYRE. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be speaking today about an extremely important piece of legislation that my good friend, Representative SUE MYRICK, and I are introducing. The Scott Gardner Act

strengthens our national immigration laws and preserves our public safety.

On July 16, 2005, 33-year-old husband and father, Scott Gardner, was killed by a drunk driver while his family was driving to the beach located in my congressional district. His wife was critically injured and his two children were robbed of their father for the rest of their lives. The drunk driver was a repeat offender and an illegal immigrant, an individual who should never have been in this country in the first place.

This tragedy was completely preventable, but our broken borders allowed an illegal immigrant with four prior drunk driving charges to remain in the United States. This situation must change so that we never lose another life to a criminal who doesn't deserve rightfully to be in our country.

This act, the Scott Gardner Act, would ensure that DWI is grounds for mandatory detention and deportation of illegal aliens. It would improve communications between Federal, State and local agencies. And it would allow those agencies and law enforcement to collect immigration information in the course of their normal duties.

FAMILY FARM PRESERVATION ACT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, America has some of the most beautiful farmland in the world. But rapidly expanding urban sprawl is threatening this cherished natural resource every day. In fact, since 1960, approximately 1.5 million acres of American farmland have been converted to nonagricultural uses each year.

This week, I will introduce legislation aimed at slowing this trend that threatens family farms and our cherished open spaces. The Family Farm Preservation Act would encourage farmers to continue farming their land by exempting them from capital gains taxes when they sell their land development rights to qualified groups committed to conservation. Without protection from this significant tax burden, too many farmers are being forced to sell their land to developers, and that means fewer family farms and ever-shrinking open spaces.

By giving farmers an incentive to continue farming their land, this bill helps preserve the cherished way of life while protecting beautiful American landscapes at the same time. I hope all my colleagues will support the Family Farm Preservation Act.

PRESIDENT'S HOMELAND SECURITY BUDGET

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, in his second State of the